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NSC BRIEFING

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6 SEPTEMBER 1955

FRENCH NORTH AFRICA

I. French settlers in Morocco are continuing to oppose the understanding between Premier Faure and Moroccan Nationalists reached at Aix-les-Bains and are unlikely to co-operate with the new Resident General, Boyer de Latour. Settler pressure on the present Moroccan Sultan, Mohamed ben Afrafa, is undoubtedly behind his repeated public refusals to abdicate, and de Latour may have to remove him forcibly in order to meet France's commitment to the Moroccans.

A. Meanwhile, terrorism continues throughout Morocco despite strong military and police repression. The assassination on 4 September of a prominent moderate nationalist is considered evidence that extremist nationalists are impatient with concessions made by the moderates.

1. A general strike, apparently called by the nationalists for 12 September in Casablanca, is likely to create additional security problems.

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B.

Outbursts similar to the Oued-Zem massacre of 20 August would severely tax the thinly-dispersed military forces.

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1. The more than 60,000 French troops now in Morocco are constantly being reinforced by small units from France.

II. In Algeria, there is considerable apprehension that a new flare-up is imminent in spite of the extension of the state of emergency to all four Algerian departments and the arrival of further troop reinforcements from France.

A. Military strength in Algeria is now about 120,000 supplemented by a substantial number of quasi-military groups, general and special police units, air force and naval groups.

1. Some settlers are armed, despite the instructions of the governor general, and are reported to be forming vigilante groups and taking action against Algerian Moslems.

B. Since the stiff reprisals taken after the 20 August uprising in the Constantine-Philippeville area, Algerian Moslems are noticeable more defiant, and support for extremist nationalists is considerably stronger and more widespread than heretofore.

III. Meanwhile, despite considerable dissension, the French Cabinet on 29 August accepted Faure's five-point program. The points:

A. Replacement of Grandval by de Latour as Resident General (already accomplished)

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- B. Departure of Sultan ben Arafa.
- C. Establishment of a Throne Council.
- D. Formation of a representative government under a Moroccan to be designated by the Throne Council.
- E. Return of ex-Sultan ben Youssef from Madagascar to France.

IV. Sultan ben Arafa's refusal to withdraw to date seems to have reopened the split in the French cabinet, Defense Minister Koenig opposing the sultan's removal and Foreign Minister Pinay objecting to putting pressure on him to resign.

- A. Faure and Protectorates Minister July are intent on having ben Arafa leave immediately, in order to meet Faure's deadline for a settlement (12 September).

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V, In view of the French cabinet's acceptance of the Faure program, there seems little possibility that the French National Assembly will be recalled before the normal 4 October date.

VI. Two French government representatives have reportedly reached Madagascar and conferred with the exiled ben Youssef: General Georges Catroux (who was critical of the deposition of ben Youssef in 1953, and is sympathetic to Moroccan nationalism)

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and Henri Yrissou (Foreign Minister Pinay's personal assistant, who probably represents conservative French interests). They are presumed to have discussed the three latter points of the Faure program.

A. Several delegations of Moroccan moderates are now in route to Madagascar to confer with ben Youssef.

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